

ST. RITA OF CASCIA HIGH SCHOOL

BAND AND RITANETTE HANDBOOK

2007-2008



Mustang Bands...the PRIDE of St. Rita

Pride and Tradition Never Graduate!

Miss Cindy Gradek, Band Director

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Dear Parents and Students,

This handbook should be read and re-read in order to fully understand what is expected of band and ritanette members. This information has been compiled to give you a concise and logical picture of our expectations. It is important that we communicate at all times. This handbook should explain to you in great detail my views on discipline and grading.

The only way this program survives is through the loyalty and dedication of the parents and students. In order for us to achieve our goals, we all must be responsible for many things outlined in this book. Parents, I ask that you respect and have your children follow our guidelines especially in the matters of attendance and practicing.

I promise you that I will do everything in my power to build a successful program with successful students. I ask you for your cooperation throughout the year. It is through **everyone's** help, dedication, and support that we are able to achieve so much. Parents, I make a humble plea for you to **get involved**. This program will provide great things for your child, but we need your help. Please read carefully the section on boosters and fundraising obligations/fees.

For those of you who find this document compatible to your philosophy and style, we welcome you and suggest you become an active member of the St. Rita band/ritanette family.

Sincerely,

Ms. Cindy Gradek
Band Director

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PHILOSOPHY

The St. Rita High School band and ritanettes hold a distinguished tradition of excellence. This excellence is achieved through dedication, hard work, discipline, sacrifice, pride, and fun. The goal of our group is to become the most responsible Christian individuals we can. Music is only the tool we use to accomplish our goal. We don't have to be the best there is, only the best we can be. Members of the band, ritanettes, and staff are always in the pursuit of excellence in all facets of life.

RESPONSIBILITY

Due to our limited practice schedule, students are required to take full responsibility for themselves. **ATTENDANCE is mandatory at all rehearsals and performances.** This is a class and should be treated as such. I respectfully ask that doctor's appointments and WORK not be scheduled during our classes and performances. Commitment by everyone is expected. If for a VERY legitimate reason you cannot make a rehearsal or performance, the director must be notified **in writing** (from a parent/guardian) at least one week in advance for a missed rehearsal, and at least two weeks in advance for a missed performance. In cases of extreme emergency, an allowance may be made. **JUST BECAUSE YOU HAVE TURNED IN A NOTE, IT DOES NOT MEAN YOU ARE EXCUSED FROM REHEARSAL. ALL ABSENCES COUNT AGAINST YOUR GRADE** (consult grading policy). However, make-up work will be given for excused absences.

*****NEW THIS YEAR***** There are absentee forms included in your packet of information. You may also download a form at www.stritahs.com.

TARDINESS is not tolerated. All students are to be in their seats (or on the field) with their instruments ready to be played when the rehearsal time arrives. We live by the motto, "To be early is to be on time: to be on time is to be late." Students will be marked tardy if they are not in their seats at the beginning of rehearsal. On regular school days, attendance is taken at 3 p.m. Three tardies will result in a personal jug. After three tardies, the parent will be notified.

RESPECT for all people involved in the program is a must. The students must respect all directors and staff, all student leaders, all students, the schools they represent, and most of all themselves. Any disrespect is totally unacceptable and will be dealt with on a case by case basis. This includes following the rules of the program and swearing.

PRACTICE is one of the major responsibilities of a band/ritanette member. Each individual must practice at home on a daily basis. This is the only way we achieve our goals throughout the year. Parents are urged to encourage home practice as often as possible. Students should practice a minimum of one hour per day on non-band days.

CHAIN OF COMMAND

BAND DIRECTOR (Ms. Cindy Gradek):	Responsible for the total band and ritanette program at St. Rita High School.
ADMINISTRATIVE ASST.(Mrs. Jodi McLawhorn):	Directly responsible to the band director and has specific responsibilities for collecting money, and other office work to assist the director.
INSTRUCTORS:	Directly responsible to the band director and have specific duties including assisting and running of rehearsals.

Section leaders, squad leaders, ritanette captains, and band officers also play a vital role in the operation of the band and ritanettes. However, the ultimate responsibility is on each member to make sure things run smoothly.

BAND/RITANETTE BOOSTERS

The Band/Ritanette Booster Association is a special group composed of parents, alumni and friends of the band whose purpose is to supply moral and financial support for the program. Regular meetings are held monthly beginning at 7:00 p.m. **EVERY FAMILY WITH A STUDENT IN THE BAND OR RITANETTES IS REQUIRED TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BAND BOOSTER ASSOCIATION.** This involves a yearly fee of \$20. The boosters supply the awards for the band, sponsor parties/social events, feed the students when needed, help purchase equipment, uniforms, etc. The boosters would also wish to invite all parents/friends to come out to as many of the band/ritanette functions as possible. PLEASE BECOME AN ACTIVE MEMBER. WE NEED YOUR HELP SO WE CAN CONTINUE TO PROVIDE GREAT TRAINING AND EXPERIENCES FOR THESE YOUNG PEOPLE!!!

GRADING POLICY

The three main factors which determine a student's grade are listed below. ALL students are required to do a great deal of work as a member of this group. The STUDENT is responsible for making up time and missed work. The work and time must be approved by Ms. Gradek at least one week prior to the end of the grading period. For St. Rita students, Ms. Gradek will be on edline by mid-September. You may check your grades there.

1) ATTENDANCE

- Missed Rehearsal
 - i. The student must turn in a note (form included in this packet) from their parent/guardian at least one week PRIOR to the rehearsal they are going to miss.
 - ii. The student is responsible for making up their missed time.
 - iii. If no note has been turned in, the student not only has to make up the time, but they also receive one quiz grade of "0." If the student doesn't do the make up time, they will receive two quiz grades of "0."
- Missed Performance
 - i. The student must turn in a note from their parent/guardian at least TWO weeks PRIOR to the performance they will be missing (form included in this packet).
 - ii. The student is responsible for making up their missed time and writing a two page essay of Ms. Gradek's choice. The student is responsible for seeing Ms. Gradek for their topic.
 - iii. If no note has been turned in, the student not only has to make up the time and do the report, but they also will receive three test grades of "0." If the student fails to do the make up time and/or report, they will receive a grade of "F" for the quarter.

2) PLAYING/WRITTEN QUIZZES AND TESTS

- Students will be tested regularly on scales, rhythms, theory, and their music.
- Tests will be administered by Ms. Gradek, a staff member, or computer.

3) ATTITUDE AND COOPERATION

- This program requires the cooperation of everyone.
- Students are expected to show the characteristics of a person with honor, integrity, discipline, and Christian values.

HONORS CREDIT

Junior and Senior students are eligible to take band for an honors credit. This credit is given to those who do work at an honor level. Thus, there are many requirements. There will be no leniency with these requirements. If you want the honor credit, you MUST do ALL the work. See Ms. Gradek if you would like to be invited into the honor band program. The requirements are as follows:

- 1) PRIVATE LESSONS (both semesters)
 - The student must take a minimum of 8 private lessons on their main band instrument per semester. The teacher must be approved by Ms. Gradek.
 - The student must turn in a lesson report form (included in packet) signed by their private teacher at least one week prior to the end of the semester.
- 2) MUSIC THEORY (both semesters)
 - The student must complete all music theory assignments.
 - The student must be able to pass a proficiency exam.
- 3) CONCERT REPORT (both semesters)
 - The student must attend a concert and give a one page report/critique.
 - A ticket stub and/or program must be turned in with the report.
- 4) IMEA SCALES (1st semester)
 - The student must perform the sheet of scales in under 3 minutes.
 - All notes are to be tongued
 - The student must set up a time to perform these for Ms. Gradek at least two weeks prior to the end of the semester.
- 5) WRITTEN REPORT (1st semester)
 - The student must type a 2 page report on the composer and piece they will be performing for the solo contest 2nd semester.
 - The student must turn in the report by the end of the 1st semester.
- 6) SOLO CONTEST (2nd semester)
 - The student must perform a solo approved by Ms. Gradek.
 - The student must be able to perform the solo with accompaniment (computer accompaniment is fine).
- 7) HONOR RECITAL (2nd semester)
 - The student must perform in the honor recital at the end of the year.
 - The music must be approved by Ms. Gradek.

Those students seeking honors credit, must complete all of the requirements for the regular band grade plus the honors requirements. There could be possible considerations for other credit. Please contact Ms. Gradek for approval.

FUNDRAISING OBLIGATIONS

Operating a program of this magnitude requires a great deal of time and money. In order to avoid having to collect individual fees for every activity which involves band and ritanette students (or every time equipment needs repairs), we have established a system of financial obligations which will keep your fundraising time to a minimum and allow us to concentrate on more important matters, like music. Since the dollar amount provided by the school for the band is insufficient, each member of the St. Rita band and ritanette family is both expected and required to meet certain financial obligations in order to help offset our operational expenses. **THESE FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES HAVE BEEN SET UP TO HELP DEFRAY THE COST OF THIS PROGRAM FOR YOU AND YOUR CHILD. PLEASE GET BEHIND THESE EVENTS SO WE CAN KEEP YOUR COST LOW.**

MANDATORY BAND FEES – There is a \$150 mandatory band fee for all members. The fees have been broken down by two semesters. The first semester fee of \$75 is due by October 15th. The second semester fee of \$75 is due by February 1st. *****NEW THIS YEAR***** All semester fees are now made through Mrs. Laura Kennedy in the front office. Miscellaneous fees are still accepted through the band office.

CHRISTMAS WREATH SALES – The wreath sale is not mandatory. However, it is **STRONGLY** recommended that you participate in it. Students receive the 50% profit from the sales. For example, if Joey sells \$500 worth of wreaths, Joey gets \$250 in his student band account. Students may use that money toward their second semester fee, their trip, or band camp for the following year.

REQUIRED BOOSTER EVENT – This year on September 30th, the band boosters will be sponsoring the Mustang Stampede marching band competition. In order to make this event a success, we need every family's help. All band and ritanette students will be required to help out that day. We are also asking that a minimum of one adult from each family works with us that day. All profits from the competition will be given to the boosters and spent directly on the band. ***If you cannot provide an adult for that day, there is a \$75 fee.*** This event brings in roughly \$10,000 for the program. This alleviates the necessity for multiple fundraisers.

CONCERTS – Every year we hold a Christmas concert and a spring concert. Students are required to sell a minimum of five tickets to each of these concerts. The cost of each ticket will be three dollars. All money the students bring in from ticket sales goes directly into their account (100%). The idea of selling these tickets is to sell them to people who will go to the concert. We work very hard to prepare for concerts and we would like to have a big audience to share them with. This also gives students another opportunity to get money into their accounts.

STUDENT ACCOUNTS

Students can earn money for their own personal band/ritanette accounts. This money is mostly earned through the sale of Christmas Wreaths. However, there might be other opportunities for the students to earn money. Money can only be withdrawn from these accounts for band camp, band marching shoes, second semester booster fees, and band trips. Reeds, oils, sticks, etc. cannot be paid for with account money. We no longer sell these items anyway.

If a student graduates and there is money left in their student account, that money is donated to the band. **STUDENTS WHO LEAVE THE PROGRAM OR GRADUATE, DO NOT GET A REFUND FROM THEIR ACCOUNT.** However, if a student graduates and has an immediate family member (brother or sister only) in the program, or is going to join the following year, the graduate's account may be transferred over to the sibling's account. Please contact Mrs. McLawhorn before next year starts to notify her of any transferring of funds.

EQUIPMENT RENTAL FEES

School owned equipment, which includes instruments, music, uniforms, chairs, stands, etc. is provided at great expense for student use. Damage to any of these, caused by student carelessness or indifference, will be charged to the student. All students are expected to be responsible in their use of equipment issued to them. The small fees charged for instrument use do NOT pay for their upkeep.

Students using a school owned instrument will be charged a rental fee (see fee list). All members of the percussion section are also charged a rental fee. Percussionists are provided with performance sticks, but are expected to purchase their own practice sticks. There is an equipment rental form included in this packet.

AWARDS

At the end of each school year, a banquet is held to honor our band and ritanette members. The band director gives out special awards which pay tribute to outstanding band and ritanette members. These awards are based on talent, discipline, and dedication to the program.

In addition, the Boosters provide awards over and above those given by the band director. These awards are presented to those students who, according to the director and booster president, earned them. These awards are based on the following criteria:

1. Minimum of a "C" average in band during all grading periods
2. Student and family has met all financial obligations
3. Dedication and loyalty to the program (attendance is part of this!)

SUMMER BAND/BAND CAMP

The band and ritanettes meet on a limited rehearsal schedule during the summer months. During this time, basic marching is taught as well as the music for parades and athletic events. The band also begins to prepare for the fall marching season.

The fall marching season is officially kicked off each year by an at home pre-camp and band camp. These camps concentrate on the fall field show. **ALL STUDENTS PLANNING ON PARTICIPATING IN THE BAND OR RITANETTE PROGRAMS ARE EXPECTED TO ATTEND ALL CAMPS.** The camps are held each year around the beginning of August. The cost of the camp will be kept around \$100. The students may use money from their accounts to pay for camp. The amount charged for camp is not the entire amount--the booster organization picks up the balance.

PRIVATE LESSONS

Private lessons offer the student additional and valuable one-on-one training with a specialist that simply cannot be matched in a full band rehearsal setting. The private lesson allows for attention to individual problems in a more efficient setting and provides for more rapid advancement on the part of the student. Students are highly encouraged to study privately. We have an excellent roster of private teachers for the students to study with. The price range is from \$10-\$15 per half hour depending on the teacher's fee. **STUDENTS TAKING PRIVATE LESSONS AND SHOWING PROGRESS ARE GIVEN ADDITIONAL CREDIT TOWARD THEIR GRADE AND AWARDS.**

UNIFORM CODE

The organization provides all parts of the marching uniform except shoes. You will be informed of the cost of the shoes during the summer. The director will order the shoes because they all must be uniform. **DO NOT GO OUT AND BUY YOUR OWN MARCHING SHOES.** You are financially responsible for all parts of the uniform assigned to you. The following rules must be adhered to when dealing with uniforms:

1. All students are to appear in full uniform for all engagements
2. Failure of a student to have all parts of their uniform with them, may subject them to missing that particular performance. Not performing would be considered an unexcused absence.
3. There is to be no eating of any kind or drinking of anything other than water while in uniform.
4. No jewelry is to be worn while in uniform.
5. No facial paint may be worn during games.
6. ***A \$5 fee will be charged for any student who needs to borrow a black shirt or black socks from the uniform moms.***

NOTE: Full marching uniform shall be defined as proper shoes, proper plain black socks, pants, all BLACK cotton t-shirt, coat, hat, proper gloves, plumes, and baldric. During concert season, gentlemen are to purchase a tuxedo shirt.

*****STUDENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR TAKING CARE OF THESE UNIFORMS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR. ANY NEGLIGENCE, INCLUDING NOT HANGING UP THE UNIFORM PROPERLY AND PUTTING IT AWAY, CAN RESULT IN A FINE AND/OR PUNISHMENT.**

PARENT AND STUDENT BAND/RITANETTE PROGRAM CONTRACT

The form below is to be signed by both the student and the parent. This form must be returned to the band director BEFORE September 6th. If you have any questions, or need to contact us, please feel free to email us (band@stritahs.com, cgradek@stritahs.com, jmclawhorn@stritahs.com) or call the band room (773)925-6600 ext. 6659.

We have read this handbook thoroughly. We understand the rules and policies that are contained in this document. We also understand the consequences of any infractions of said policies. We understand our obligations and commitment to the St. Rita band/ritanette program as outlined within and agree to abide by the policies it has set forth.

STUDENT SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

PARENT SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____